

To the Members of the California State Senate:

I am returning Senate Bill 568 without my signature.

I support having clear conflict of interest standards for independent scientists who judge whether the California Environmental Protection Agency's (CalEPA) regulations are based on sound science. However, this bill contains a critical flaw by making university and independent scientists subject to the conflict of interest rules developed for state employees and elected officials. Scientists in academia face different kinds of potential conflicts than policymakers and public officials, and should therefore be governed by standards that reflect their particular profession.

The bill would prohibit a person from performing a statutorily mandated peer review of a CalEPA scientific document if they meet certain criteria for conflicts of interest. By using general definitions that apply to policymakers, this bill would prohibit many of the most qualified scientists from performing peer reviews, while not adequately screening out other scientists who may have actual conflicts of interest.

Sincerely,

Arnold Schwarzenegger